Θεσσαλία στέφανον τεύχων: Epinician motifs in Theotimos' funerary Epigram (*CEG* 637)

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Abstract. The aim of the present essay is to draw some parallelisms between Pindaric Epinikia and a funerary inscription praising a fallen warrior named Theotimos. Through the study of these parallelisms we intend not only to highlight common rhetorical and literary features but also similar socio-cultural dynamics underlying the dedication of funerary epigrams for fallen warriors and the composition of victory odes. In this sense special attention will be paid to the exploration of motifs such as the glory conferred on to the city and the practice of dedicating crowns.
Keywords: Pindar; Theotimos; epigrams; odes; glory; crowns.

[es] Θεσσαλία στέφανον τεύχων: rasgos del epinicio en el epigrama funerario de Teotimos (*CEG* 637)

Resumen. El objetivo del presente trabajo es delinear algunos paralelismos entre epinicios pindáricos y una inscripción funeraria que elogia a un guerrero caído en batalla, llamado Teotimos. Mediante el estudio de dichos paralelismos se busca no sólo resaltar rasgos retóricos y literarios comunes, sino también las similares dinámicas socio-culturales involucradas en la dedicación de epigramas funerarios y en la composición de odas de victoria. En este sentido, se prestará especial atención al estudio de motivos tales como la gloria otorgada a la ciudad y la práctica de la dedicación de coronas.
Palabras clave: Píndaro; Teotimos; epigramas; odas; gloria; coronas.

Sumario. 1. Introduction. 2. Not dishonouring the glory of the city of Atrax. 3. Procuring a crown for Thessaly. 4. Conclusions.

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1. Introduction

In November 1977, during the construction of a building, a stele of white marble was discovered in Larisa. This stele, reused several times throughout the Hellenistic and Roman periods, contained an epigram in elegiac distichs praising a fallen warrior named Theotimos:

> Οὔ τι καταισχύνας πόλεος κλέος ἐνθάδε κεῖαι.
>   Ἄτραγος εὐρυχόρο᾿ Θεσσαλία ᾿ στέφανον
> τεύχον, ⸌ο Θεότιμε, Μενύλλου παῖ, σὺν ἀρίστο(ι)ς
>   ἀνδρ(ά)σιν Ἑλλένον ἐν Τανάγρας πεδίοι².

> Here he lies, in no way dishonouring the glory of the city of Atrax of the wide places, procuring a crown for Thessaly, o Theotimos, son of Menyllos, with the noblest of men among the Hellenes in the plain of Tanagra.

Based on the mention of the Battle of Tanagra, it is possible to date the epigram and the stele to 458/457 B.C. As regards its linguistic and literary features, Helly (2004: 19-20) notes the marked Thessalian colouring of the first distich (πόλεος κλέος…Ἄτραγος εὐρυχόρο᾿). By contrast, the second distich contains a reference to the noblest men among the Greeks (ἀρίστοις ἀνδρ(ά)σιν Ἑλλένον), thus moving from an epichoric scenario to a more pan-hellenic dimension.

Overall the inscription displays motifs from well-known poetic traditions, exhibiting in its diction and content a tantalizing mixture of regional and supra-regional features. It evokes epic vocabulary, of which we can find examples in some Homeric passages, especially *Od*. 24.507-508: ἀνδρῶν μαρναμένων ἵνα τε κρίνονται ἄριστοι, / μή τι καταισχύνειν πατέρων γένος ("where the noblest men distinguish themselves in combat, so that in no way they dishonour the race of their fathers")[3]. The common use of καταισχύνω ('dishonour') and the reference to combat as an enterprise in which only the best of men engage permits a parallel between Theotimos' epigram and the Odyssean passage. The inscription also incorporates a similar Iliadic motif that features in the dialogue between Glaukos and Diomedes: πέμπε δέ μ᾿ ἐς Τροίην, καί μοι μάλα πόλλ᾿ ἐπέτελλεν (…) / μηδὲ γένος πατέρων αἰσχυνέμεν, οἳ μέγ᾿ ἄριστοι / ἔν τ᾿ Ἐφύρη ἐγένοντο καὶ ἐν Λυκίη εὐρείη. ("And he sent me to Troy, and commanded me greatly…not to dishonour the race of my fathers, that were far the noblest in Ephyre and in wide Lycia" *Il*. 6.208-209). In this case, the common motif of not dishonouring one's parents is accompanied by an explicit clarification of the province and city from which these

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[2] I print Helly's (2004) text with my own translation. I give here his translation: "En rien tu n'as pu faire honte à la gloire de ta cité pour reposer ici, (la gloire) d'Atrax aux vastes étendues, en te faisant pour la Thessalie artisan d'une couronne (de gloire), ô Théotimos, fils de Ményllos, aux côtés des plus valeureux des Grecs dans la plaine de Tanagra". The inscription is written in the Thessalian alphabet, which does not display characteristic lettering and it is not possible to identify with certainty traces of the local dialect. For problems concerning the editing and interpretation of the letters, see Helly (2004) and Tentori Montalto (2017). *Cf*. also Gallavotti (1988) and Guarducci *EG* I (1967).

[3] All the translations from the Greek are my own, unless stated otherwise.

noble men come, a clarification that reminds us of the mention of Thessaly and of Atrax in Theotimos' epigram.

As Helly (2004: 20) points out, this theme of honour and dishonor –primarily connected in the Homeric epics to an intimate familial circle– evolves through time so as to characterize the relationship between warrior and *polis* and the consequent glory or shame that the former can bring the latter. This dynamic, illustrated by Theotimos' epigram, also constitutes a significant rhetorical *topos* deployed in Tyrtaean elegy and the *epitaphios logos*[4]. However, there is yet another poetic tradition that Theotimos' epigram evokes: the Epinikion. Both Helly (2004) and Tentori Montalto (2017) delineate parallelisms between victory odes and Theotimos' funerary inscription. These deserve a more detailed study that not only highlights rhetorical and literary features, but also pays attention to the similar socio-cultural dynamics underlying the dedication of funerary epigrams for fallen warriors and the composition of victory odes[5]. The present essay conducts such a study, focusing especially on the dialogue between Theotimos' inscription and Pindaric poetry.

2. …Not dishonouring the glory of the city of Atrax…

The first hexameter of Theotimos' epigram contains a word firmly embedded both in the poetic tradition and in the Greek ideal of transcending mortal existence: κλέος ('glory'). This ideal is already expressed most conspicuously in the Homeric poems, especially through the phrase κλέος ἄφθιτον ('imperishable glory') and can be fulfilled either by the erection of a monument or the transmission of a person's deeds through song[6]. In the case of the Homeric poems, gaining imperishable glory is mostly a private affair, aimed at highlighting the actions of a single individual (*e.g.* the epic hero) or of his household[7]. In the case of Theotimos' funerary inscription, even if the mention of κλέος certainly ensures that the actions of this particular warrior will not be forgotten, the term also acquires a public dimension that encompasses both the renown of the fallen combatant and of the city on behalf of which he fought (in this case Atrax in Thessaly). We are no longer in the world of the Homeric *epos*, where warriors faced each other on the battlefield mostly in single combat, but in the world of the *polis*-state, where hoplites collaborated together in close and permanent formation to bring down

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[4]   For the relation between elegy, inscribed epigram and funerary oration, see Gentili (1968) and Loraux (1981).

[5]   For a detailed analysis of these topics, see also Day (1989); Köhnken (2007); González González (2019), etc.

[6]   For the preservation of the hero's fame through a tomb, *cf. Il.* 7.91; *Od.* 4.548. For the transmission of heroic deeds through song, see *Il.* 6.357-58; *Od.* 3.204, 8.580, 24.196-201.

[7]   This does not mean that the sole obligation of the Homeric hero is to his own prowess and drive to victory and power. There are indeed situations in which responsibility to the community and patriotism take precedence, especially if we consider Hector in the *Iliad* (*cf. Il.* 3.50; 6.403; 12.243; 15.496-499). On this topic, see Greenhalgh (1972), who argues that it is possible to find in the Homeric poems and in the elegies of Tyrtaeus the same patriotic sentiment (*contra* Bowra 1938). Nevertheless, the existence of this patriotic sentiment does not undermine the fact that, when Homeric heroes refer to the κλέος they wish to gain, they do so in purely personal terms (*cf. Il.* 4.197; 5.172; 6.446; 7.91; 8.192; 9.413; 10.212; 17.143; 18.12; 22.514; *Od.* 1.298; 3.380; 4.726; 5.31; 7.333; 8.147; 9.264; 13.422; 16.241; 18.126; 19.333; 24.94, etc).

the enemy and where individual prowess tended to be subordinated to a common goal[8]. This process of subordination is most clearly attested in the last part of Theotimos' inscription, where the epigrammatist reminds us that the soldier perished with the noblest of men in the plain of Tanagra (σὺν ἀρίστο(ι)ς / ἀνδρ(ά) σιν Ἑλλένον ἐν Τανάγρας πεδίοι).

The aforementioned variations in the dimension of κλέος prompt us to inquire about the status and meaning of the word in Pindaric epinikia, a genre that, at first sight, seems closer to the Homeric ideal than to the communal sentiment transmitted in Theotimos' epigram. According to Slater (*s.v.*), in these poems the term alludes to the fame of persons or things. In one occasion (*P*. 4.125) it is used in a neutral sense, with the meaning of φάμα ('report'). Following this reasoning, Nagy (1994: 199) has stated "the convergent *κλέος* of Pindar's epinician lyric poetry may momentarily collapse the distinction between hero and victorious athlete". This statement is certainly true, especially when we consider that both hero and athlete come from an aristocratic context and aim to gain fame for their own γένος ('race') and for themselves, either through remarkable deeds on the battlefield or triumphs at local and pan-hellenic competitions. Both figures also hope that their glory reaches posterity through material means and/or through song[9]. This circumstance is widely reflected in the Pindaric corpus, where the word κλέος is applied, 10 out of 17 times, to athletes' or heroes' personal enterprises[10].

Nevertheless, and despite the preceding similarities, a careful reading of Pindar's odes shows that these compositions are not purely devoted to the celebration of particular individuals and their households, but can also depict the different ways in which athletes and *polis* interact[11]. In this sense, and to borrow Nagy's words, the convergent *κλέος* of Pindar's epinician lyric poetry may also momentarily collapse the distinction between victorious athletes and city-state warriors in the 5th Century B.C. Indeed, the proximity of agonistic and military *aretê* entails a generic affinity between actions that allow a certain individual to stand out, by doing something meritorious for his fatherland (*cf*. Bernardini 1982: 146). An example can be found in *I*. 7.21-30, an Epinikion in which the poet not only celebrates Strepsiades' triumph

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[8]   As regards the different fighting techniques of Homeric warriors and hoplites, *cf*. Van Wees (1994, I-II), who states that, even though it is possible to distinguish a certain form of mass combat in the *Iliad*, the formations rapidly scatter and divide into smaller groups. This circumstance, combined with the need to exalt individual heroic *ethos*, results in the typical Homeric scene in which the focus is placed solely on one on one confrontations. As regards the evolution from this way of combat to the tactics followed by hoplites in the different *polis*-states, it is not easy to ascertain whether these changes should be interpreted in terms of a significant revolution in the art of war or just as a gradual change that slowly took place over the centuries. See further Brizzi (2008); Cartledge (1996).

[9]   For the relationship between sculpture and Pindaric poetry, *cf*. Steiner (1993). As regards the phenomenon of re-performance, see Morrison (2007b; 2010; 2011; 2012), Currie (2004; 2011; 2017), Fearn (2010; 2017), Spelman (2018).

[10]   *O*. 1.23 to Hieron, *O*. 1.93 to Pelops, *O*. 8.10 to athletes in general, *O*. 10.95 to Hagesidamos, *P*. 4.125 to Jason, *P*. 4.174 to the heroes of the ship Argo, *N*. 7.63 to Sogenes, *N*. 9.39 to Hector, *I*. 5.8 to athletes in general, *I*. 6.25 to Pelops. The other occurrences of the term refer to the fame of Rhodian sculptors (*O*. 7.53); to the human condition in general (*O*. 9.101); to the Dorians that emigrated to *Magna Graecia* (*P*. 1.66); to the poet (*P*. 3.111); to the glory of Spartan heroes that colonized Cyrene (*P*. 5.73); to the poet or the choir (*N*. 8.36). The last example (*I*. 7.29) will be dealt with in detail below.

[11]   Kurke (1990; 1998) analyzes how Pindaric poems incorporate economical aspects specifically embedded in the fifth-century *polis* system. One of these aspects involves precisely the dedication of crowns on behalf of the city to which the athlete belongs, a topic that will be treated more extensively below.

in the Pankration (454 B.C.?), but also links it to his deceased uncle's performance in battle:

φέρει γὰρ Ἰσθμοῖ
νίκαν παγκρατίου, σθένει τ’ ἔκπαγλος ἰδεῖν τε μορ-
    φάεις, ἄγει τ’ ἀρετὰν οὐκ αἴσχιον φυᾶς.
φλέγεται δὲ ἰοπλόκοισι Μοίσαις
μάτρωΐ θ’ ὁμωνύμῳ δέδωκε κοινὸν θάλος,
χάλκασπις ᾧ πότμον μὲν Ἄρης ἔμειξεν,   25
τιμὰ δ’ ἀγαθοῖσιν ἀντίκειται.
ἴστω γὰρ σαφὲς ὅστις ἐν ταύτᾳ νεφέλᾳ χάλα-
    ζαν αἵματος πρὸ φίλας πάτ ͘ ρας ἀμύνεται,
†λοιγὸν ἀμύνων† ἐναντίῳ στρατῷ,
ἀστῶν γενεᾷ μέγιστον κλέος αὔξων
ζώων τ’ ἀπὸ καὶ θανών.

For he (Strepsiades) is winner of victory at the Isthmus in the pancratium; he is awesome in strength and handsome to behold, and his success is no worse than his looks. He is being set ablaze by the violet-haired Muses and has given a share of his crown to his namesake uncle, whom Ares of the bronze shield brought to his fated end; but honour is laid up as a recompense for brave men. For let him know well, whoever in that cloud of war defends his dear country from the hailstorm of blood by turning the onslaught against the opposing army, that he fosters the greatest glory for his townsmen's race,[12] both while he lives and after he is dead (Translation Race).

In the previous verses it is possible to see how the motif of success in the games acts as a foil for the honour gained in combat, especially through the figure of the crown (*cf.* the following section). This assimilation places both athlete and warrior on the same level and allows us –through the transitional phrase τιμὰ δ’ ἀγαθοῖσιν ἀντίκειται ("…but honour is laid as a recompense for brave men", v. 26) – to equate the figure of the generic combatant described in the last part of the passage to that of a victorious athlete.

Let us focus now on κλέος (v.29) in these verses. As stated before, most occurrences of this term in Pindar's poems (see n. 7) are aimed at highlighting the glory of individuals. Nevertheless, in this particular occasion, the term acquires a sense that instantly reminds us of Theotimos' epigram. Just as Theotimos' inscription states that he did not dishonour the κλέος of the city of Atrax, the poet here declares that whoever defends his πάτρα (v. 27) will gain the greatest glory for the race of his citizens (ἀστῶν γενεᾷ μέγιστον κλέος αὔξων, v. 29). This Epinikion exhibits a more communal use of the term κλέος, therefore showing a civic oriented ideology in terms of combat, in accordance to roughly contemporary motifs deployed in funerary epigrams and the elegies of Simonides and Tyrtaeus[13].

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[12]   γένος alludes not to the close relatives or the personal household of the warrior, but to the civic body he glorified through his performance in battle.

[13]   *Cf. CEG* 2; 4; 6; 10 and Tyrt. fr.10; 12 West. The *Elegy of Plataia* (fr. 11 W = fr.5 A) written by the poet Simonides of Ceos deserves a special mention in this sense, since its main theme involves a comparison between the glorious inmortality (κλέος ἀθάνατον, fr.5 A, v. 15) of the homeric heroes fallen in combat and the renown that befell the greek hoplites that perished at Plataia. For detailed studies of this poem, see Schachter (1998); Boedeker-Sider (2001); García Romero (2007); Stripeikis (2016), among others. For the κλέος motif in the Elegy, *cf.* specially Kyriakou (2004). An analysis of simonidean funerary epigrams can be found in Bravi (2006: 37-90).

This same process can be traced in Pindar's poems for the motif of honour and dishonour, a motif that thus transcends the inner familial circle of the Homeric poems, projecting itself to the life of the *polis* (*cf*. Introduction). In Theotimos' epigram we are told through the litotes οὔ τι καταισχύνας ("in no way dishonouring…") the kind of behaviour the son of Menyllos exhibited, when he fought on behalf of his city. *N*. 5. 4-8 displays a similar communal sense of honour, only this time applied to the relationship between successful athlete and *polis*:

> Λάμπωνος υἱὸς Πυθέας εὐρυσθενής
> νίκη Νεμείοις παγκρατίου στέφανον,
> (…)
> ἐκ δὲ Κρόνου καὶ Ζηνὸς ἥρωας αἰχματὰς φυτευθέν-   6
>   τας καὶ ἀπὸ χρυσεᾶν Νηρηΐδων
> Αἰακίδας ἐγέραιρεν
>   ματρόπολίν τε, φίλαν ξένων ἄρουραν·

> Lampon's mighty son Pytheas has won the crown for the pancratium in Nemea's games, (…) and he has honoured[14] the Aeacidae, heroic warriors, born of Cronus and Zeus and from the golden Nereids, and his mother city, a land welcoming to foreigners (Translation Race).

In the previous passage, the poet tells us that through his triumph Pytheas honoured (ἐγέραιρεν, v. 7) his mother city Aegina (ματρόπολίν, v. 8), a dynamic that reminds us of Theotimos not dishonouring (οὔ τι καταισχύνας) his own place of provenance (Atrax). In this sense the honour conferred onto the fatherland encompasses both the realms of martial and athletic experience, since the outstanding performance of both athlete and soldier can positively affect a certain community.

3. …Procuring a crown for Thessaly…

The communal sense of the topics of honour, dishonour and glory that both Epinikia and Theotimos' inscription exhibit can be further illustrated if we also take into consideration the mention of the crown as a symbol both for athletic and martial success.

Nevertheless, before we pursue this point further, we must clarify the expression τεύχων στέφανον. As Tentori Montalto (2017: 62) has established, in Theotimos' epigram this expression needs to be understood primarily in a metaphorical sense as "procuring a crown" ("ottenendo una corona"). But what is the literal meaning of the idiom? Since the verb τεύχω generally means 'to make', 'to build' (*LSJ, s.v*) and the noun στέφανος 'that which surrounds or encompasses, *e.g.* a wall' (*LSJ, s.v*), the expression can be literally understood as "building a wall for Thessaly". The phrase is used in this sense in P.*O*. 8.32 to describe the construction of the Trojan wall by Apollo, Aeacus and Poseidon (μέλλοντες ἐπὶ στέφανον τεῦξαι). Another interesting

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[14] I differ here from Race's translation of ἐγέραιρεν as 'glorified'. I choose instead to translate this verb as 'honoured', since it primarily refers to the privilege bestowed upon an individual through the offering of a gift, a γέρας (*cf*. Chantraine, *s.v*).

example, this time featuring the verb στεφανόω, is given in an epigram transmitted by Pausanias (9.15.6):

> ἡμετέραις βουλαῖς Σπάρτη μὲν ἐκείρατο δόξαν,
>   Μεσσήνη δ᾽ ἱερὴ τέκνα χρόνῳ δέχεται·
> Θήβης δ᾽ ὅπλοισιν Μεγάλη πόλις ἐστεφάνωται,
>   αὐτόνομος δ᾽ Ἑλλὰς πᾶσ᾽ ἐν ἐλευθερίῃ.

> With my advices was Sparta deprived of her fame and sacred Messene receives her children in time and with the weapons of Thebes was Megalopolis surrounded and all of Hellas is independent in freedom.

In this case the verb στεφανόω retains its original meaning 'to be put round in a circle' (*LSJ*, *s.v.*), 'to be surrounded' (*LSJ*, *s.v.* 2). Both this and the Pindaric example can help illustrate how in Theotimos' epigram, even if the metaphorical sense of the idiom τεύχων στέφανον Θεσσαλίᾳ is predominant, it is still possible to recover the original meaning of the expression and understand that with his weapons the soldier had built a wall for Thessaly, that is, had surrounded Thessaly and therefore defended his motherland "come una cinta di mura" (Tentori Montalto 2017: 63). In this sense we can also recall that Agesilaos, when asked why Sparta had no walls, immediately pointed at the armored citizen body and answered: ταῦτά ἐστιν τὰ Λακεδαιμονίων τείχη ("Here they are, the walls of Sparta", Plut. *Apoph. Lac*. 210E, 29). As regards the metaphorical use of the expression "to crown the city", its earliest appearance (480-470 B.C.) is attested in an inscription found in the villa of Herodes Atticus in Loukou, dedicated to the fallen warriors of the tribe of Erectheus[15]. The epigram states that these warriors crowned Athens (ἐσστεφάνοσαν Ἀθένας, v.3) when fighting against the Medes. Theotimos' inscription preserves this crowning metaphor, this time through the somewhat peculiar construction τεύχων + στέφανον.

As stated at the beginning of this section, the action of "crowning the city" or of "procuring a crown for the city" is highly significant for delineating the similarities between the worlds of athletic and military prowess and to understand the communal use of certain terms deployed both in Theotimos' epigram and in Pindar's victory odes. It is no novelty that athletes are often depicted, both in epigrams and in Pindaric Epinikia, as bearers of crowns that confer prestige on their respective places of origin[16]. According to Kurke (1990; 1998) this public dedication of the victor's crown is a ritual gesture that symbolically represents the sharing of the athlete's talismanic power (κῦδος) with the whole civic community, explicitly making the victory into a civic triumph. Occasionally the athletes involved in this process can also be well-known for their outstanding skill in combat[17]. Such is the case of Milo of Kroton, of whom it is said that he entered the battlefield crowned with his six Olympic crowns (*cf.* Diod. Sic.12.9.5-6) and of Eualkides, the commander of the Eretrians in the Persian wars, who, according to the testimony of Herodotus (5.102.3), was also a

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[15]   For a detailed epigraphical and historical analysis of this inscription, *cf.* Tentori Montalto (2014).

[16]   *Cf.* among others *AP* 16.2; 13.15; *CEG* 811; 788. In Pindar, see *O*. 5.1-4; 9.19-20; *P*. 2.5-6; *N*. 11.19-21 and the passage from *I*. 1 analyzed below.

[17]   For a general overview of the relations between athletes and soldiers in Greek literature and society, see Bernardini (2016); Pritchard (2016).

profuse winner of crowns in the games[18]. We have already seen as well how in Pindar (*I*. 7.21-30) the actual athletic crown can play a significant role as a symbol of an outstanding performance on the battlefield, within a system where athletes and soldiers are considered both ἀγαθοί ('noble', 'brave') and, therefore, entitled to receive the same honours (τιμαί). Finally, it is also possible to find the association between the realms of athletic and military success in at least one funerary inscription from Argos dedicated to one Hisematas:

> (A)Ϙοσίνα hυσεμάταν θάψα [π]|έλας hιποδρόμοιο
>   ἄνδρα ἀ|[γα]θ[ὸ]ν πολοῖς, μνᾶμα καὶ| [ἐσ]ομένοις,

> (B) ἐν πολέμοι [φθ]ίμενον νε|αρὰν hέβαν ὀλέσαντα,
>   σόφρονα, ἀε<θ>λοφόρον καὶ σ|οφὸν hαλικίαι.

> I Cosina, buried Hisematas close to the racecourse, a man noble with horses and a remembrance to those who will come,

> He died in war, losing his tender youth, moderate, winner of prizes and wise among his contemporaries (*CEG* 136).

Hisematas appears here described both as a combatant and as a winner of prizes. Even if the process of dedicating crowns is not mentioned in this inscription, we could perhaps assume, given our extant evidence (*cf*. n.13), that Hisematas also engaged in this practice.

As we have previously stated, procuring or dedicating a crown for a city constitutes a practice that causes a whole community to partake in an athlete's remarkable deeds. The representation of victory odes helps to reinforce such practice by perpetuating it through re-performance (*cf*. n. 6). Also, given the strong similarities between the realms of athletic and military prowess, it is not surprising to find the practice of "dedicating" or "procuring" crowns in an inscription honouring a fallen warrior.

Nevertheless, even if this is so, it is worth highlighting the somewhat peculiar character of Theotimos' inscription. First of all, although in athletic epigrams the practice of crowning a city is widely attested, the same cannot be said either for public or private funerary war epigrams roughly contemporary to Theotimos' inscription. As a matter of fact, the only epigram that comes really close to Theotimos' in terms of the metaphorical crowning of a city is –as we have already mentioned– the Loukou stele, where soldiers are said to have crowned Athens[19]. Even in this particular inscription, however, the agent of the crowning is a collective comprised of warriors and not a single individual. If we add to this circumstance the fact that Theotimos' inscription bears the expression στέφανον τεύχων, so far unattested in funerary epigrammatic diction, but with interesting parallels in Pindaric Epinikia

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[18]   An epigram transmitted by Pausanias (6.4.6) and dedicated to Chilon of Patras also shows the strong bond between the spheres of athletic and martial enterprise: μουνοπάλης νικῶ δὶς Ὀλύμπια Πύθιά τ' ἄνδρας, / τρὶς Νεμέᾳ, τετράκις δ' Ἰσθμῷ ἐν ἀγχιάλῳ, / <Χίλων> Χίλωνος Πατρεύς, ὃν λαὸς Ἀχαιῶν / ἐν πολέμῳ φθίμενον θάψ' ἀρετῆς ἕνεκεν ("In single combat against other men I won twice in Olympia and in Pytho, three times in Nemea and four at the Isthmus, close to the sea. I, Chilon of Patras, son of Chilone, to whom the Achaean people, having died at war, buried because of my excellence").

[19]   We do find examples of the opposite scenario, that is, of soldiers being crowned by the city, in *CEG* 431, for example.

(*cf. O.* 8.32; and the examples taken from *I.* 1 analyzed below), then the epigram of Menyllos' son is very close to being a unique specimen of the genre, partly due to the strong connections it bears to the realm of the victory ode. These connections can be reinforced by the analogous results that the procuring of a metaphorical crown for Thessaly and the actual dedication of victory crowns to one's land bring about. Both Theotimos and the athletes that engage in this practice share their individual deeds with a specific civic community. In this sense the fixing of the words Θεσσαλίᾳ στέφανον τεύχων ο Θεότιμε, Μενύλλου παῖ on a material surface helps –as much as the re-performance of Pindaric Epinikia do– to project Theotimos' act of "procuring a crown" to posterity.

Let us now consider two Pindaric passages that bare strong resemblances to Theotimos' inscription[20]:

ἐπεὶ στεφάνους
ἐξ ὤπασεν Κάδ᾽μου στρατῷ ἐξ ἀέθλων,
καλλίνικον πατρίδι κῦδος.

Because it (the Isthmus) bestowed six crowns on Cadmus' people from its games, the glory of victory for their fatherland (*I.* 1.10-11, Translation Race).

In these verses we encounter the familiar topic of the dedication of the crown to a civic community, in this case Thebes. The phrasing of the words strongly reminds us of Theotimos' epigram. Indeed while the Isthmus bestowed crowns on Cadmus' people (ὤπασεν στεφάνους Κάδμου στρατῷ), Theotimos managed to procure one crown for Thessaly. By this comparison we confirm once again the interdependence of athletic and military practices, through the appropriation of the crown motif to enhance the relationship between dead warrior and civic community. Connected to this motif, we also encounter once again in the previous passage the motif of the communal sense of glory. This time the word used to refer to the glory obtained is not κλέος, but κῦδος. Although the implications of these two terms might differ slightly[21], κῦδος also assumes here a communal sense, since it was procured not in order to glorify one single individual or his household, but an entire population (πατρίδι, v. 11). We are instantly reminded of Theotimos not dishonouring the glory of his city, Atrax.

The second passage exhibits similar motifs:

εἴη νιν εὐφώνων πτερύγεσσιν ἀερθέντ᾽ ἀγλααῖς
Πιερίδων, ἔτι καὶ Πυ-
   θῶθεν Ὀλυμπιάδων τ᾽ ἐξαιρέτοις
Ἀλφεοῦ ἔρνεσι φράξαι χεῖρα τιμὰν ἑπταπύλοις
Θήβαισι τεύχοντ᾽.

May he, lifted on the splendid wings of the melodious Pierians, also from Pytho and from the Olympic games wreathe his hand with choicest garlands from the Alpheus, thus bringing honour to seven-gated Thebes (*I.* 1.64-66, Translation Race).

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[20]   On these passages, *cf.* as well Tentori Montalto (2017: 62-63) and Helly (2004: 22).
[21]   For the difference between κῦδος and κλέος, see Benveniste (1973) and Kurke (1998).

These verses are significant for various reasons. First of all, and according to Privitera (1982: 154):

> Le corone vinte a Delfi e ad Olimpia fortificherebbero la mano di Erodoto così come una cinta di mura mette al riparo un popolo, un' armature un uomo (…) Con perfetta coerenza, alla mano di Erodoto *munita* (…) di corone corrisponde Tebe *cinta* di mura con sette porte (ἑπταπύλοις).

The words of Privitera instantly remind us of the literal meaning of the expression Θεσσαλίᾳ στέφανον τεύχων ("building a wall for Thessaly"), the meaning of which could also be applied –as previously stated– to Theotimos' actions. Another similarity between epigram and Pindaric ode is to be found in the use of the verb τεύχω (v. 66), which exhibits, alongside its literal sense, a seemingly metaphorical stance. Indeed in both inscription and Epinikion the verb can be interpreted and translated as 'procuring', instead of simply as 'building' or 'creating'. In *I*. 1.66 what is procured or brought (in Race's translation) is honour (τιμή). And once again this honour exhibits a public character, since it is conferred not onto a tight circle of relatives and forefathers, but onto the city of Thebes.

4. Conclusions

As regards Theotimos' epigram and the multiplicity of Pindaric motifs it deploys, it is not possible to state with certainty whether these constitute an appropriation by the epigrammatist based on a more or less competent knowledge of Pindar's odes. Certainly the transference of the crown motif to the realm of war could have been prompted by the already existing similarities between athletes and soldiers, as these two figures were conceived and valued by Greek society. The same can be said for the process of sharing the crown with the community by a single individual. Finally the use of the topics of honour, dishonour and glory are already attested in other funerary epigrams and in other genres, such as Tyrtaean elegy. We must also take into account the difficulties involved in the secure dating both of Pindaric Epinikia and inscriptions. Nevertheless the mention of the battle of Tanagra allows us to date Theotimos' epigram to 458/457 B.C., a circumstance that makes this composition roughly contemporary with the Pindaric epinikion it resembles the most, *I*. 1 also from around 458 B.C.[22]. Therefore, even if it is impossible to establish the exact rapport between Theotimos' inscription and this composition, it seems almost certain that they both share specific features, among which the most conspicuous appear to be the metaphorical use of the verb τεύχω and the reference to the crown as a fortification device. We must also not forget that the exact same expression inscribed in Theotimos' stele στέφανον τεύχων ("procuring a crown"), features in *O*. 8.32, an ode dated to 460 B.C., in which it bears the literal meaning of "building a wall" (στέφανον τεῦξαι). Could the epigrammatist that composed Theotimos' elegy

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[22]   Tentori Montalto (2017: 62) affirms that *I*. 1 is an "opera tarda del poeta composta certamente dopo le Guerre Persiane e molto probabilmente nel clima della battaglia di Tanagra, come sembra deducibile dall'abbinamento nell'ode di Castore e Iolao, l' uno spartano, l'altro Tebano". Privitera (1982: 9) also points out that even the other *termini post quos* put forward by the critics, 474 and 468 B.C.., would not be contrary to an ode composed after the battle of Tanagra of 458 B.C.

be aware of this particular Pindaric passage? Is it possible that he cleverly adapted it to the field of martial prowess, giving it a new metaphorical stance alongside its previous literal sense? Or was it the other way round? These questions run the risk of remaining forever unanswered. What is certainly true, though, is that both Pindaric odes and Theotimos' epigram allow us to gain, through the linguistic and literary features they have in common, a deeper understanding of the similar socio-cultural dynamics underlying the roles of athletes and soldiers in Archaic and Classical Greece and a glimpse of the conventional fifth-century language used to commemorate both athletic and martial deeds. Either through the re-performance of victory odes or the reading of Theotimos' prowess, firmly carved on the marble, the actions and processes we have analyzed in this article (*e.g.* the dedication or procuring of crowns, the honour and glory conferred upon one's own place of origin), will be transmitted to future generations, thus allowing both warrior and athlete to fulfill the ideal of κλέος ἄφθιτον, the acquisition of which had already driven Homeric heroes onto the battlefield.

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